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Epidemiological profile of hospitalizations for headache in Brazil: the impact on women of childbearing age

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Introduction
Headache, particularly migraine, is a highly prevalent neurological condition that disproportionately affects the female population due to hormonal fluctuations and psychosocial factors. In women, the chronicity and intensity of attacks significantly impact quality of life and productivity. When these crises become refractory or acute, they require urgent medical attention, resulting in hospital admissions that strain the public healthcare system, especially during the reproductive years.

Objective
To analyze the epidemiological profile of hospitalizations for headache among women in Brazil, highlighting the impact on the population of childbearing age, from January 2020 to March 2026.

Methods
This is a descriptive, retrospective epidemiological study using secondary data from the Hospital Information System (SIH/SUS), obtained through the DATASUS/TABNET platform. Hospitalizations of female patients occurred between January 2020 and March 2026 were selected, using the disease category "Migraine and other headache syndromes" (corresponding to ICD-10 codes G43 and G44). The analyzed variable was age group. Data were organized and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results
During the analyzed period, 45,135 hospital admissions for headache in women were recorded in Brazil. The population of childbearing age (defined between 15 and 49 years old) accounted for 28,223 of these hospitalizations, representing 62.5% of all cases. When evaluating age groups in isolation, the peak of admissions was concentrated in the 30 to 39 age group with 8,633 cases (19.1%), followed by 20 to 29 years old with 8,403 cases (18.6%), and 40 to 49 years old with 8,071 cases (17.9%). Conversely, age extremes showed the lowest frequencies of hospitalization (infants under 1 year old with 51 cases and elderly women over 80 years old with 1,135 cases).

Conclusion
The profile of hospitalizations for headache in Brazil demonstrates that the disease heavily burdens the healthcare system within the young and adult female population. These findings highlight the imperative need to strengthen public health policies focused on women's health in primary care, with emphasis on specific care pathways for hormonal headaches, health education to prevent self-medication, and access to effective preventive treatments, aiming to reduce hospital admission rates.

Keywords:
Migraine disorders
Headache
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